

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15

DHA-02 MCT-01 /085 W

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R 041347Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL BELFAST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1596

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNAVCOMMSTA LONDON DERRY

UNCLAS BELFAST 073

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK, EI

SUBJECT: ATTACKS ON BUSINESSMEN CONTINUE

REF: (A) BELFAST 72 (B) BELFAST 12 (NOTAL)

1. THREE NORTHERN IRELAND BUSINESSMEN HAVE BEEN SHOT AND FOUR HAVE BEEN WOUNDED BY TERRORISTS SINCE THE DEATH OF JEFFREY AGATE LAST MONTH. MOST ATTACKS HAVE BEEN CLAIMED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA. TWO OF THE VICTIMS WERE MEMBERS OF THE ORANGE ORDER BUT THERE IS NO APPARENT LINKAGE BETWEEN THE VICTIMS EXCEPT THAT THEY WERE TARGETS OF "ECONOMIC WARFARE." IN BELFAST HOMES OF TWO PROMINENT LOCAL BUSINESSMEN IN WELL-TO-DO MALONE ROAD AREA WERE BOMBED NIGHT MARCH 3-4.

2. OFFICIAL REPUBLICANS HAVE CONDEMNED KILLINGS AS LIKELY TO PROVOKE SECTARIAN RETALIATION. THIS MAY BE EXACTLY WHAT PROVISIONALS WANT IN ORDER STRENGTHEN THEIR SUPPORT IN REPUBLICAN AREAS. ATTACKS ON POLICEMEN AND BUSINESSMEN PROBABLY MOTIVATED ONE RETALIATION THAT MISFIRED. TWO MEMBERS ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE WERE KILLED NIGHT FEBRUARY 27 BY PREMATURE
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EXPLOSION BOMB THEY APPARENTLY WERE CARRYING TO CATHOLIC DRINKING CLUB IN WHICH THERE SOME 150 PATRONS AT TIME. THERE ALSO RENEWED DEMANDS FOR DEATH PENALTY FOR TERRORIST ACTS.

3. THIS ATMOSPHERE EXPLAINS CURRENT LOCAL UPROAR FROM LOYALISTS ABOUT CRITICISM OF POLICE. LATEST ISSUE IS BBC TELEVISION PROGRAM SHOWN NATIONWIDE MARCH 2 IN WHICH TWO COUNTY

FERMANAGH MEN ALLEGED THEY ABUSED BY ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC) DURING INTERROGATION. LOYALISTS HAVE CONSISTENTLY CLAIMED BBC SYMPATHETIC TO "REPUBLICANS" AND OFFICIAL UNIONISTS, VANGUARD UNIONISTS AND ORANGE ORDER HAVE EXPRESSED OUTRAGE AT TIMING AND "PROPAGANDA" NATURE OF PROGRAM. SECRETARY OF STATE ROY MASON WHO HAS SKIRMISHED WITH BBC BEFORE (REFTEL B) IS ALSO REPORTED TO BE DISPLEASED.

4. CONGEN HAS NO RPT NO KNOWLEDGE OF WHETHER THERE SUBSTANCE TO CHARGES OF POLICE BRUTALITY. POLICE CLAIM THAT DURING INTERROGATIONS THEY ARE "MOST TIGHTLY CONTROLLED POLICE FORCE IN THE WORLD." SO FAR THIS YEAR THERE HAVE BEEN 15 MORE FORMAL COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE RUC THAN THE 300 FOR THE SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR. IT DOES APPEAR THAT THE RATE OF RECRUITMENT FOR ROMAN CATHOLICS IS GOING UP SLOWLY BUT THE FACTOR OF HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT IS PROBABLY AT LEAST AS IMPORTANT IN THIS AS IS GROWING ACCEPTANCE OF RUC.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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